

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Annual Assessment of the	)	MB Docket No. 05-255
Status of Competition in the	)	
Market for the Delivery of	)	
Video Programming	)	

**REPLY COMMENTS OF THE JOINT CABLE COMMENTERS**

Commenters in this proceeding have raised the issue of whether competition in the video programming marketplace has been affected by retransmission consent, submitting comments from related proceedings into the record. *See, e.g., Comments of The Walt Disney Company*, MB Docket 05-255, filed Sept. 19, 2005, at 6. The filings attached hereto are being submitted in the reply round of this proceeding by the Joint Cable Commenters to complete the record.

The expanded basic tier remains a strong value, but the use of retransmission consent to launch, and enhance distribution of, broadcaster-owned channels (that the Big Four insist on including on the most popular service tier) has been a major factor in shaping the price and composition of the package. In particular, consumers shoulder the impact of retransmission consent by paying higher prices than they otherwise would for cable television service. The attached filings demonstrate that retransmission consent has driven the increased size and price of the expanded basic tier of cable television by giving broadcasters the power to leverage a public asset -- free spectrum provided by the government -- to obtain revenues from cable consumers.

For these reasons, the Commission should give full consideration to the impact of retransmission consent on the video programming distribution marketplace and on the price and availability of video programming choices for consumers.

Respectfully submitted,



Of Counsel:

Bertram W. Carp  
WILLIAMS & JENSEN, P.C.  
1155 – 21st Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 659-8201

Bruce D. Sokler  
Christopher J. Harvie  
Fernando R. Laguarda  
Robert G. Kidwell  
Michael T. Haas  
MINTZ, LEVIN, COHN, FERRIS,  
GLOVSKY AND POPEO, P.C.  
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 434-7300

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*Attorneys for Joint Cable Commenters*  
*Advance/Newhouse Communications*  
*Cox Communications, Inc.*  
*Insight Communications*